

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1, 9, 11-13, 15 and 18-21 will remain pending in the above-identified application and stand ready for further action on the merits.

The applicants have instantly amended the claims to more clearly define the present invention. More specifically, claim 18 has been amended to be in a product-by-process form. In instantly amended claim 18, the process comprises a reaction to obtain a urethane prepolymer having terminal isocyanate groups and a modification of the terminal isocyanate groups of the urethane prepolymer. Support for the reaction to obtain a urethane prepolymer having terminal isocyanate groups is found at page 47, lines 18 to 24 of the present specification, and support for the modification of the terminal isocyanate groups of the urethane prepolymer is found at page 47, line 25 to page 48, line 5 of the present specification. Claims 19 to 21 have been amended in accordance with the amendment of claim 18.

No new matters have been added by these amendments.

Examiner's Comments in the Advisory Action Dated November 28, 2003

In the Advisory Action, the Examiner states as follows:

"Continuation of 2.: Newly presented claim 18 raises an issue under 35 U.S.C. 112, in that it is unclear if the prepolymer is required to contain any terminal

isocyanate groups. At line 6 of the claim, it is clearly stated that the prepolymer has terminal isocyanate groups; however, at line 7 of the claim, it is further stated that the terminal isocyanate groups are partly or wholly modified. The language of claim 18 is not equivalent for the subject matter of claim 16."

As mentioned above, the applicants have amended claim 18 into a product-by-process form.

As can be seen from instantly amended claim 18, the modified urethane prepolymer of claim 18 is obtained by a process comprising (1) reacting a polyisocyanate with a polyoxytetramethylene glycol to obtain a urethane prepolymer having terminal isocyanate groups, and (2) partly or wholly modifying the terminal isocyanate groups of the urethane prepolymer with at least one functional group other than an isocyanate group (hereinafter, simply referred to as the "non-isocyanate functional group(s)"). From instantly amended claim 18, it can be easily understood that, when the terminal isocyanate groups of the urethane prepolymer are **partly** modified, the resultant modified urethane prepolymer contains at the terminals thereof **both of** the isocyanate groups and the non-isocyanate functional groups, and that, when the terminal isocyanate groups of the urethane prepolymer are **wholly** modified, the resultant modified urethane prepolymer contains at the terminals thereof **only** the non-isocyanate functional groups.

It is believed that the instant amendments have brought the present application into condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and early favorable action are earnestly solicited.

CONCLUSION

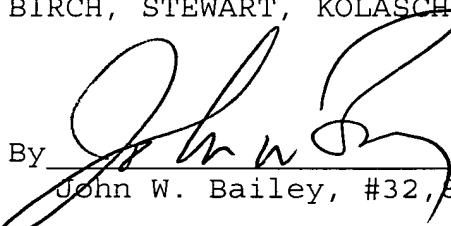
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John W. Bailey (Reg. No. 32,881) at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By


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